WESTMINSTER COURT OF SEWERS.

A GENERAL court was held on Friday last, Capt. Bague in the chair. The first business of importance was to receive tenders for further works, in pursuance of the recommendation of the surveyor, for the sanatory improvement of Marylebone, viz., 3,105 feet of sewer, in Foley-place, Edward-street, Little Castle-street, and Charles-street, Marylebone. The tenders were as follow:—

H. Perline	£2,660 0
Simmons and Co.	2,610 0
J. and S. Williams	2,580 0
W. Dethick	2,401 14
G. Barr	2,395 0
W. Yeoman (accepted)	2,297 0

Tenders were also received for arching over 391 feet of King's Scholars' Pond sewer, viz.:—

J. Barr	£1,039 0
Simmons and Co.	992 0
Humphreys and Thirst	985 0
W. Yeoman (accepted	976 0

The expiring Commission.—Mr. John White brought forward his resolution for making application to the Lord High Chancellor for a new commission. He suggested, in the course of his remarks, that, in consequence of the clamour about sewers, the clerk and surveyor should attend the Lord Chancellor, to be in readiness to answer any questions, and to give all information required. He concluded by moving, "That the petition now prepared be adopted and signed by the commissioners present." The resolution was put and carried, with but one dissentient.

A report was read from the solicitors as to the omission of Chiswick from the jurisdiction of this commission, stating that they saw no valid reason why that parish should not be included.

The Right of Granting Petitions.—Mr. Willoughby brought forward the motion of which he had given notice.—"That the Court do reconsider the order of the 27th of July last, delegating to the clerk and surveyor the granting of petitions for sewers and drains during the intervals of the court-sittings, with the view to the repeal or amendment thereof." He stated that he had been induced to bring the question forward from a belief that their former decision had been hastily arrived at. By the adoption of this resolution they sanctioned a new principle, and it entirely swept away from the Court its ordinary functions; instead of which he thought it was high time that the commissioners should take a more active part, and not add to the already heavy burdens of their officers, to say nothing of the question of its legality.

Mr. White (the mover of the resolution) defended the vote that had been deliberately come to; and said, that for a considerable time past the petitions had been presented to the court in gross, and were usually granted on the guarantee of the surveyor that they were in conformity with the regulations of the court.

Mr. Marriott and Mr. Baylis supported Mr. Willoughby's motion, and Mr. Cumberlege the original resolution, as he said it would be most ungracious to rescind a former resolution, producing thereby a strong party feeling. The resolution being then put, there appeared for rescinding the resolution, 14; against it, 10: majority for rescinding it, 4. [Such child's play as this is eminently calculated to damage the commission. Mr. White's motion would have saved the time of the public, and will, we hope, be renewed.]

The late Loss of Life from a Foul Drain in Long Acre.—Mr. Le Breton brought before the court the motion of which he had given notice, relative to the want of drainage in Long Acre; and in illustration of his argument alluded to the late coroner's inquest on George Grosse, whose death, if not directly caused, had been instrumentally hastened by want of proper drainage in Langley-court, in that vicinity, the particulars of which had been brought fully before the public in the reports of the inquest. There was so great an accumulation of filth, and such an effluvium therefrom, that the owner of the house, knowing the general disinfecting properties of vitriolic acid, had cast a quantity of it into the drain, which, there meeting with other substances, had emitted sulphuretted hydrogen, and being inhaled, had caused the poor man's death; thus proving the foul drain to have been the moving cause. The greater part of Long Acre was without sewer at all, and as that court, in the last session of Parliament, had obtained powers to make sewers where none before existed, and to charge the owners of the property with the cost of them, a great responsibility was thrown upon this court; a responsibility, in fact, for all the deaths that occurred in the districts under their jurisdiction. A great mortality amongst children prevailed in those parts, co-existent with scrofulous and other diseases, and there was not an hour to be lost in devising a remedy. Mr. Dowley, their late surveyor, five years ago, had presented a plan how this object might be effected; but as they had since then changed their plans, by the general adoption of the egg-shaped sewer, this could not be adopted, and it would require their present surveyor to go over the ground again. He concluded by proposing the following resolution:—"That the surveyor be directed, with all possible dispatch, to prepare a report and all necessary plans, sections, and estimates, with the view of affording sufficient drainage in Long Acre and the streets and courts adjacent. That, owing to the importance of the case and the advanced season, the surveyor be authorised to employ during the time such assistants as he may require. That when the surveyor's report is prepared, a special court be summoned to consider the same, and take all necessary measures thereon."

Mr. Kendall seconded the motion. Mr. John White hoped the plan proposed would have reference to a general system of drainage of the entire district. Mr. Phillips, the surveyor, said this was absolutely necessary. Experience had proved to him that without a plan and levels were taken previously, the chances were that sewers may be put in at improper levels, and so have no reference to their ultimate extension. Mr. Hawkes said that they had got a good plan before them, and that a remedy ought not to be delayed. It appeared now, that nothing could be done unless it received the sanction of certain parties, and formed one of the evils of this monster commission. For his part, he saw no reason why the plans should not be laid on the table by that day week. Mr. W. Donaldson said, that as long since as 1845 plans for this object had been offered to the Mercers' Company, who could not be induced to move at all in the matter. Mr. Unwin remarked, that a very efficient drainage for Wellington-street had been provided, but that not above seven or eight householders had availed themselves of it. Mr. Le Breton replied, and stated that if they extended the existing sewers, the expense would fall on the ratepayers, and not on the Mercers' Company.

The motion was then unanimously adopted.

New Books.

Monumental Brasses and Slabs; a Historical and Descriptive Notice of the incised Monumental Memorials of the Middle Ages. By the Rev. CHARLES BOUTELL, M.A. G. Bell, Fleet-street. 1847.

THE monumental brasses of the middle ages, independently of their beauty as works of art, and their value as historical memorials, are of great service to the architect and architectural decorator.

"To the genealogist they afford authentic cotemporary evidences: to the herald they furnish examples of the original usages in bearing arms, and authorities in the appropriation and adjustment of badges and personal devices: the architect here will find, in rich variety, the details and accessories illustrative, as well of peculiar modes of arrangement and combination, as of the distinctive characteristics of style and design: the chronologist hence may deduce authentic data to determine, with truly remarkable exactness, successive eras and epochs: the artist has before him original compositions, illustrating the early excellence, and then the progressive, though happily only temporary, decline in the art, of such pre-eminent importance, that of incision: to the general antiquary, from the same source, widely diversified information will accrue: the palæographer also is hence enabled to fix the distinctive form of letter used at certain periods, together with the prevalent peculiarities of contraction and abbreviation, conformable, for the most part, to that which is found in legends depicted upon stained glass, in illuminations, or on engraved seals."

The work before us is a very pretty book, profusely illustrated, and got up in a manner creditable to Mr. Bell, the publisher. Moreover it is a readable book, and when we first dipped into it we were disposed to give it a hearty recommendation. Examination and comparison, however, have greatly altered our opinion of the work; the labours of others have been appropriated wholesale, and that, too, in a case where it presses most heavily, tending greatly to the pecuniary injury of the parties laid under contribution. Had the author been contented with borrowing from Cotman's and Stothard's, and other works which have been for some time before the public (as he has done pretty largely), we should have said little about it; but when we find no fewer than *fourteen plates* copied, without permission or acknowledgment, from an elaborate and costly work *now in progress*, and which, at present, cannot possibly return to its authors the cost of its production, we feel it to be our duty to protest in the strongest possible terms against such a proceeding. Many of our readers will understand that we allude to the Messrs. Waller's work on brasses, for which the drawings here copied were obtained with labour and expense. To prove the truth of what we have said, we may point to the following as amongst those taken from the work in question; the frontispiece; Sir John D'Aubernoun, 1277 (to obtain which the Messrs. Waller were at the expense of removing the altar rails); Sir R. Septvans; Sir R. Trumpington; Sir — Fitzralph; Priest at Wensley; Sir John Leventhorpe and lady, and the Swynbornes, at Little Horkesley. Nor is there the slightest acknowledgment of the theft, excepting in one other case where permission was asked and given, and which, being duly set forth, of course serves to convince the unsuspecting public of the honesty of the author, and makes the matter worse. All are interested in discouraging such a system.

Correspondence.

GEOMETRIC SYSTEM OF THE ANCIENT ARCHITECTS.

SIR,—Perhaps the following quotation from Spenser's "Faerie Queene" (if it has never been previously remarked) may throw some light upon the proportions of ancient structures. It is curious and interesting, from one who delighted to study "The image of the antique world."

"The frame thereof seem'd partly circulare
And part triangulare; O worke divine!
Those two the first and last proportions are;
The one imperfect, mortal, feminine;
Th'other immortall, perfect, masculine;
And 'twixt them both a quadrate was the base,
Proportioned equally by seven and nine;
Nine was the circle sett in heaven's place!
All which compacted, made a goodly diapase."

W. C. T.

Miscellanea.

RESTITUTION OF OPENINGS IN NEW PARTY-WALLS, LONDON.—In the case of an appeal against the district surveyors' certificate relative to a party-wall in Wood street, City, the question has arisen, and remains still unsettled, as to whether when a party-wall is condemned as ruinous, and ordered to be rebuilt, the party building is to leave similar openings in the new wall to those in the old wall. The official referees are for preserving the ancient lights, and have so awarded, as we are informed; but the registrar thinks that no openings ought to be permitted in the new party-wall, and has refused to affix the seal of office to the award.

THE OLD DEANERY, LINCOLN.—Workmen are now busily engaged in demolishing the old deanery, north of the cathedral, the most modern part of which, called Wolsey tower, was built during the short period that the cardinal was Bishop of Lincoln. According to the *Daily News*, a new building, in the Elizabethan style of architecture, is to be built rather more to the eastward; it is regretted that the present opportunity will be allowed to pass over of opening the north side of the minster to view.

STATISTICS OF RAILWAY EMPLOYMENT.—A return of the number and description of persons employed on the railways of the United Kingdom (open for traffic), on the 1st of May last, has just been printed, from which it appears there were employed on seventy-four railways, comprising an extent of 3,305 miles, 47,219 persons. From a similar return on lines and branches in course of construction at the same period, amounting to 122, and comprising an extent of 6,455 miles, it appears there were 256,509 persons employed. Total, 303,727.

ST. MARK'S SQUARE, VENICE.—The view of St. Mark's-square, at Vauxhall Gardens, is a very creditable piece of decoration. The "Library," by Sansovino, the prototype of the New Carlton, is seen to good effect.

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